

# ORALL NEWSLETTER

OHIO REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

JUNE, 2010

VOLUME 2010, NUMBER 2

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*President's Column – Ken S. Kozlowski*

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## President's Column

### Libraries Continue to Sustain Attacks in 2010

In my first presidential column back in December (<http://orall.org/newsletters/2009-12.pdf>) I spoke about law libraries being closed and tried to sound optimistic about what might happen in 2010. That optimism has now gone the way of the Pet Rock. Just in the past month or so there have been reports about more law library closings, cut backs due to budget restraints, and a movement towards what is being called a “vending library.”

Two situations which I believe are the beginning of the end for libraries as we know them occurred in California and Massachusetts. In California, one school district closed all of their K-5 libraries (*California School District Closes All K-5 Libraries*, <http://tinyurl.com/28ys2c3>). The move was made to plug \$1.6 million of the district's \$17.3-million budget gap by the end of FY2012–13. A district spokesperson was quoted as saying

“We have deep, deep, deep regret about this action, which speaks nothing to the value we place on libraries.” Expect to hear more of these types of statements in the coming months. Here's the kicker: although it was emphasized that the libraries would be reopened once the budget crisis ends, K–5 students will find their school library collections inaccessible *behind locked doors* for the 2010–11 academic year. So what they're saying is that they can't afford to unlock the door?

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# ORALL

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**Dues: \$20 per year**

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### Newsletter

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**Unsolicited contributions are encouraged; contributions submitted for publication are subject to editorial review. For extra copies, contact the editor.**

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**Advertising (per issue) : \$150 for full page, \$90 for half page, \$55 for quarter page, and \$35 for eighth page.**

### **Profile**

ORALL is a 4-state chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries [Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan]. It was formed in 1949 "to further the development and usefulness of law libraries and to stimulate a spirit of mutual helpfulness among law libraries of this region." An annual conference is held each fall. ORALL publishes or sponsors the following publications: *Core Legal Collection* [bibliographies for Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan], ORALL Membership Directory, ORALL Newsletter, Ohio Legal Resources Annotated Bibliography & Guide 3rd.

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## **President's Column *continued***

My wife works as a Library Aide in a middle school, and there are 55 parent volunteers who help shelve books, etc. It's more than likely a union thing, but it's a shame that the kids in that district can't access their books even though they are still there on school property.

The other scenario occurred at a New England prep school, Cushing Academy (*Welcome to the Library. Say Goodbye to the Books*, <http://tinyurl.com/mnn986>). The Headmaster at Cushing stated that books were an outdated technology, similar to scrolls before the advent of the printing press. So what have they decided to do? Discard their 20,000 book collection of classics, novels, poetry, biographies, and tomes on every subject from the humanities to the sciences. Their plan is to spend nearly \$500,000 to create a "learning center" that consists of three large flat-screen TVs that will project data from the Internet, special laptop-friendly study carrels, and to replace the reference desk with a \$50,000 coffee shop that will include a \$12,000 cappuccino machine. Administrators state that they do not want to discourage reading, so to that end they will spend \$10,000 to buy 18 electronic readers made by Amazon.com and Sony. The readers will be distributed to some students, and will be stocked with digital material. Those who don't have access to the electronic readers will be expected to do their research and peruse many assigned texts on their computers.

What do those two situations mean to libraries a whole? Young students will not be exposed to the library as a place of reference, a gathering place, a place to get assistance. As a matter of fact, it won't be a *place* at all. If the youth of today witnesses the dismantling of libraries and their collections in favor of a Kindle or a packet of forms with instructions, will they visit libraries in the future? Will the law student who went to Cushing Academy now study in the library? Very doubtful. The impersonal e-reader, IM, electronic chat, or simply text messaging will be the norm, and libraries will cease to exist. When that happens, everybody will be paying Microsoft, Amazon, or Barnes and Noble for each and every book or piece of information they require. There will be no browsing on the shelves without paying for it. Granted, Google does allow for some in-book browsing. However, at least for right now, Google does not have access to every book ever printed. It boggles the mind that school administrators would jettison their entire collection of books and hand out e-readers and coffee.

What about law libraries? An Essex County (N.J.) presiding judge recently closed its law library after the librarian quit (*Court Law Libraries Feel the Budget Crunch*, <http://tinyurl.com/2auaqoz>). Most New Jersey courthouses still have law libraries, but employ only six professional librarians among them. The Essex County judge stated that \$280,000 was saved by the closure, and that the study library usage over a four-month period determined that the research needs of the public could be met with materials available in the courthouse ombudsman's office. That office distributes packets guiding pro se litigants through procedures in various courts

and has a LexisNexis terminal for online research. If a litigant has a question, they are sent to Rutgers University Law Library. What happens when Rutgers cuts back on its collection and hours? Toss 'em a Kindle, I guess.

Finally, the last vignette we'll touch on concerns a new library in Minnesota that will open with no books and no librarians (Red Box<sup>®</sup> Library?) The plan is for a library kiosk and an adjoining book locker. An article in the April 15, 2010 issue of Library Journal sums up the situation coherently (*A Vending Library Is No Library*, <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6725226.html>). The author poses the question as to what a library is – an essential service or a “recreational amenity?” If a library is essential, then how is the service conveyed to the community by a kiosk or a vending machine? If the library can be equated to a Frisbee golf course, then by all means let's burn the books and buy the e-readers and coffee machines.

The solution to the problem, at least for the libraries and librarians that I have known, is to provide such superior service that it would be inconceivable for the powers-that-be to get rid of us. For the near future, that is still the case. We just have to be prepared for the time when superior service is not enough – when the budgets are in even worse shape, and adults of tomorrow know as much about libraries as they do about a floppy disk, a record player, or a videocassette.

\* \* \*



(Pro Football Hall of Fame, Canton, Ohio)

## **Bylaw Amendment Proposal**

As submitted by the ORALL Scholarship Committee:

Dear President Kozlowski,

On behalf of the ORALL Scholarship Committee and in accordance with ORALL Bylaw XV (Amendment of Bylaws), I request that the Executive Board do the following:

1. Inform the ORALL membership of the planned consideration of the proposed bylaw amendment (text follows) no later than August 14, 2010.
2. Place the proposed bylaw amendment on the agenda of the ORALL business meeting to be held during the ORALL Annual Meeting in Canton, Ohio, October 20 - 22, 2010.

*Text of proposed bylaw amendment:*

Whereas the name of the ORALL Scholarship Committee is potentially confusing and does not accurately reflect the functions of the committee, the Executive Board, in consultation with the members of the Scholarship Committee, proposes that the committee's name be changed by amendment of Bylaw IX (Committees), Section 1 (Standing Committees), [subsection] (l), striking "Scholarship Committee" and substituting "Grants Committee."

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Baldree, Secretary  
Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries

Thomas Hanley, Chair  
Scholarship Committee

\* \* \*



(National First Ladies Library and Museum, Canton, Ohio)

Gimmie a "T"

Gimmie a "E"

Gimmie a "A"

Gimmie a "M"

Gimmie a "W"

Gimmie a "O"

Gimmie a "R"

Gimmie a "K"



## **WHAT'S THAT SPELL? TEAMWORK!**

Yes, folks, that's the theme of this year's ORALL meeting.

**THE PLACE:** Canton, Ohio  
- Home to the Pro Football Hall of Fame

**THE DATE:** October 20-22, 2010

Welcome to Canton! Website:

[www.CantonOhio.gov](http://www.CantonOhio.gov)

The Local Arrangements and Education Committees are busy, busy, busy planning the activities and program that will surely entice you to attend the meeting and visit this charming city.

Looking forward to seeing you!

*Jan Morley and Beth Langton*  
(Co-Chairs, Local Arrangements)

## **AALL Announcements**

### **Get a Free Year of AALL Membership with Nonmember Annual Meeting Registration**

New this year AALL is offering nonmembers a complimentary one-year membership when they register for the [AALL Annual Meeting and Conference](#), to be held July 10-13 in Denver. The membership includes:

- Career resources, such as the online AALL Career Center and continuing education to help you learn new skills to advance in your career
- Access to specialized information created just for law librarians, such as the *AALL Biennial Salary Survey* and the AALL Price Index for Legal Publications
- Subscriptions to the monthly magazine, *AALL Spectrum*, and quarterly journal, *Law Library Journal*, to help you keep up on the latest trends in law librarianship
- The opportunity to network and connect with other law librarians from across the country who share similar interests and are facing the same challenges
- Discounted rates on all AALL products and services, such as publications, webinars, and online job postings

[Annual Meeting registration is now open.](#) Register by June 1 at the early bird rate and save \$100. Be sure to take advantage of this special offer for nonmembers.

### **A New AALL Membership Year is Underway—Don't Miss Out!**

AALL's new membership year just began on June 1. If you haven't renewed already, be sure you do asap so you don't miss out on valuable member benefits.

[AALL2go](#), our new online learning center, brings continuing education programming to your desktop, available 24/7. There are already more than 60 free programs for AALL members, with new content added monthly. Look for the 2010 Annual Meeting and Conference programming to be available on August 5.

AALL's new online [Career Center](#) provides advanced resume and job search features, whether you're looking to find or fill a law library position.

The new and improved **AALLNET** will debut this fall. The new site will be easy to navigate, feature a fresh new look, and include improved search functionality. New social media tools will allow you to form your own member groups and create group discussion forums, websites, blogs, wikis, and more.



**AALL is offering a discounted membership rate for AALL members who are recently unemployed** (\$56 instead of \$222). Unemployed AALL members should fill out the [online form](#).

For more information or to renew your membership online, view the [application form](#) on AALLNET. If you have any questions about your membership renewal, contact AALL Headquarters at [membership@aall.org](mailto:membership@aall.org) or 312/205-8022.

## **AALL2go Pick of the Month**

AALL's Continuing Professional Education Committee presents the AALL2go pick of the month: [Competitive Intelligence on a Shoestring](#).

This hour-long MP3 recording begins with speaker Susan Armstrong of Business Financial Services. She provides a definition of competitive intelligence (CI), i.e., what is going on that can affect your company or industry? No competitor is going to lay out its entire plan to make things easy for you. You must look for indicators. Armstrong's examples include, what does it mean if you find that a supermarket is advertising to hire bankers? For Armstrong's industry, it presaged banks opening in supermarkets. Or, if your research indicates that new personnel are being hired in a specific division of a competitor's company, then it might mean the company is going to branch out in a new direction that you, as its competitor, want to know about. Armstrong then outlines how to package and disseminate the information you gather to give it your stamp.

Next, speaker Sabrina Pacifici, author of the well-known *LLRX* and *Bespacific*, describes how to use her respected and frequently updated *Competitive Intelligence: A Selective Research Guide* for gathering free and/or inexpensive data about competitors. To begin, she closely examines the Microsoft and Bayer corporate websites for the many types of useful CI information they contain. She goes on to review a large number of sites from her CI list that accumulate and aggregate company data.

**Find this and more than 60 other free continuing education programs and webinars for AALL members on [AALL2go](#)!**